

## TO UNDERSTAND ITALY BY ITS NATIONAL HYMN

Here you can find the complete text of the original poem written by Goffredo Mameli.



Goffredo Mameli was just 19 years old when he wrote the poem, calling it "Canto degli Italiani" (Song of Italians). Goffredo was what we could call "a rebel" of his time. After writing the poem, he tried to adapt it to some already existing music, but as he didn't like the results, he sent the poem to a friend, Michele Novaro, who was a musician.



Michele liked the poem very much and composed the National Hymn, with Goffredo's words. Michele became very famous, however he did not earn any money out of his work. He died at the age of 66, very poor. At the same time, Goffredo never stopped fighting, in several parts of Italy, and died in Rome in 1849, at just 22 years old. Rome at the time was living through the brief experience of being a Roman Republic, that had been established by Roman people, who were rebelling against the Pope, and his rule.

Goffredo's and Michele's hymn is rather long; however it is usually performed in a short version. Performers usually sing only the first stanza, which is sung twice, and then the chorus ends with a loud "Si!" ("Yes!")\*. The third stanza, which is rarely sung, is an invocation to God to protect the loving union of the Italians struggling



to form their unified nation once and for all, whereas the fourth recalls popular heroic figures and moments of Italian independence such as the Vespri siciliani, the riots that had started in Genoa by Balilla, and the battle of Legnano. The last stanza of the poem refers

to the part played by Habsburg Austria and Czarist Russia in the partitions of Poland, linking its quest for independence to the Italian one.

(please note the parts marked in blue)

### Italian lyrics

Fratelli d'Italia,  
l'Italia s'è desta,  
dell'elmo di Scipio  
s'è cinta la testa.  
Dov'è la Vittoria?  
Le porga la chioma,  
ché schiava di Roma  
Iddio la creò.

#### *CORO:*

Stringiamci a coorte,  
siam pronti alla morte.  
Siam pronti alla morte,  
l'Italia chiamò.  
Stringiamci a coorte,  
siam pronti alla morte.  
Siam pronti alla morte,  
l'Italia chiamò, sì!

Noi fummo da secoli  
calpesti, derisi,  
perché non siam popolo,  
perché siam divisi.

Raccolgaci un'unica  
bandiera, una speme:  
di fonderci insieme  
già l'ora suonò.

#### *CORO*

Uniamoci, amiamoci,  
l'unione e l'amore  
rivelano ai popoli  
le vie del Signore.  
Giuriamo far libero  
il suolo natio:  
uniti, per Dio,  
chi vincer ci può?

#### *CORO*

Dall'Alpi a Sicilia  
Dovunque è Legnano,  
Ogn'uom di Ferruccio  
Ha il core, ha la mano,  
I bimbi d'Italia  
Si chiaman Balilla,  
Il suon d'ogni squilla  
I Vespri suonò.

#### *CORO*

Son giunchi che piegano

### English translation

Brothers of Italy,  
Italy has woken,  
Bound Scipio's helmet  
Upon her head.  
Where is Victory?  
Let her bow down,  
For God created her  
Slave of Rome.

#### *CHORUS:*

Let us join in a cohort,  
We are ready to die.  
We are ready to die,  
Italy has called.  
Let us join in a cohort,  
We are ready to die.  
We are ready to die,  
Italy has called, yes!

We were for centuries  
downtrodden, derided,  
because we are not one people,  
because we are divided.

Let one flag, one hope  
gather us all.  
The hour has struck  
for us to unite.

#### *CHORUS*

Let us unite, let us love one another,  
For union and love  
Reveal to the people  
The ways of the Lord.  
Let us swear to set free  
The land of our birth:  
United, for God,  
Who can overcome us?

#### *CHORUS*

From the Alps to Sicily,  
Legnano is everywhere;  
Every man has the heart  
and hand of Ferruccio  
The children of Italy  
Are all called Balilla;  
Every trumpet blast  
sounds the Vespers.

#### *CHORUS*

Mercenary swords,

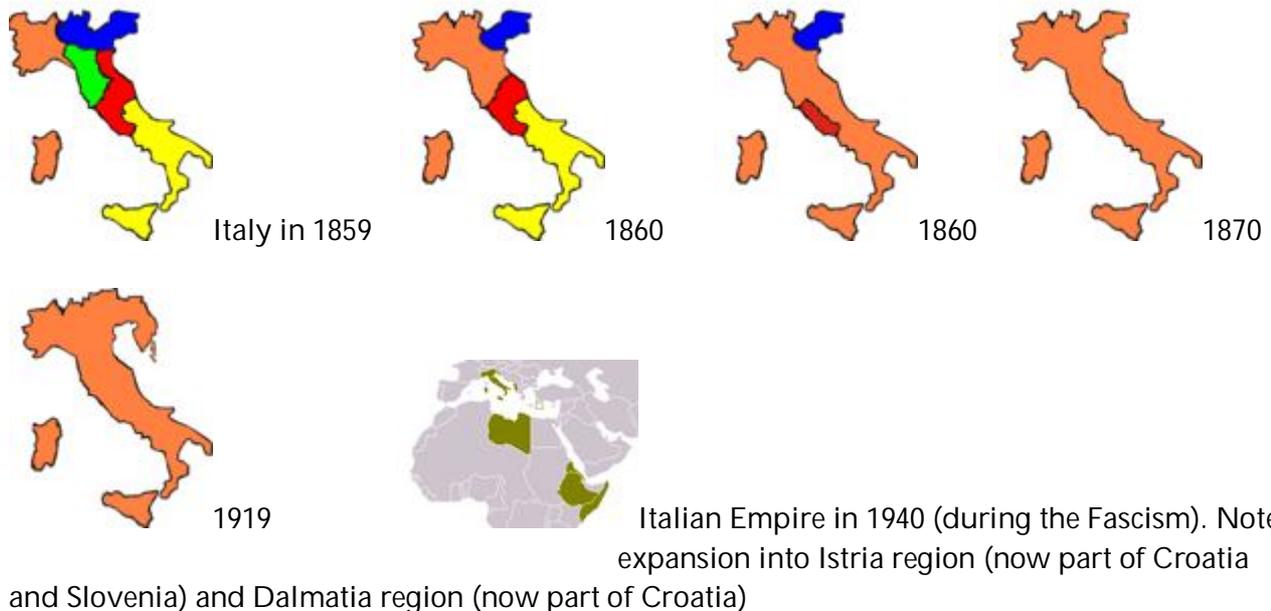
Le spade vendute:  
 Già l'Aquila d'Austria  
 Le penne ha perdute.  
 Il sangue d'Italia,  
 Il sangue Polacco,  
 Bevé, col cosacco,  
 Ma il cor le bruciò.  
*CORO*

they're feeble reeds.  
 The Austrian eagle  
 Has already lost its plumes.  
 The blood of Italy  
 and the Polish blood  
 It drank, along with the Cossack,  
 But it burned its heart.  
*CHORUS*

Further information on the Italian Hymn → [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Il\\_Canto\\_degli\\_Italiani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Il_Canto_degli_Italiani)

Audio of the Hymn: <http://youtu.be/z3RToBymttA> (\*as usually performed)

Further information on RISORGIMENTO / ENLIGHTENMENT:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian\\_unification](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_unification)





Italy now.

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